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Deadly Tornadoes and Hurricane Milton's Fury Leave Florida Counties Devastated

Massive damage and multiple deaths reported as 20 tornadoes, linked to Hurricane Milton, tear through Florida; storm now a Category 1 but continues to cause severe flooding and power outages affecting over 3 million residents

Hurricane Season / **Published On October 10, 2024 05:26 AM /**

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Tornado damage in Fort Meyers, Florida on Oct. 9, 2024.

The devastating impact of Hurricane Milton became apparent hours before the hurricane made landfall on Wednesday night. Some counties in Florida suffered massive damage from tornadoes – at least 20 confirmed in total – as twisters from a “tornadic supercell” associated with Hurricane Milton cut a path of destruction through neighborhoods and communities, some where residents

were still trying to stage last-minute evacuations.

One of the worst hit areas was St. Lucie county, where between 6 and 12 tornadoes touched down on Wednesday. Multiple fatalities were reported after a tornado struck the Spanish Lakes Country Club, a senior community near Fort Pierce. The exact number of casualties is not yet known. Injuries were also reported in Palm Beach County

Tornadoes will continue to be a threat, as watches and warnings are expected to continue into Thursday.

Apart from the tornadoes, Hurricane Milton itself generated scenes of major devastation as it cut across the Florida Peninsula. Millions have been left without power, over 3 million as recorded by [United States Power Outage Map](#). Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, which was set up to house 10,000 emergency responders including National Guard troops and out-of-state linemen, lost parts of its roof on Wednesday night. Officials say that the staging area was relocated before the damage occurred, and no injuries were reported.

The city of St. Petersburg was also forced to shut off water, following a water main break.

At 5 a.m. Thursday, Hurricane Milton – now a Category 1 storm – was about 10 miles northeast of Cape Canaveral. The fast moving system is heading out to sea, moving northeast at 18 miles per hour, with an expected turn eastward on Thursday night. Hurricane and tropical storm warnings are in effect for counties along Florida’s east coast, and tropical storm warnings are in effect for the northwestern islands of The Bahamas, including Grand Bahama, the Abacos, and Bimini.

Forecasters are still concerned about the threat of storm surges, however, with warnings still in effect for cities on Florida’s west coast up to Altamaha Sound in Georgia. Heavy flooding caused by rain and storm surge has inundated streets, homes and businesses in several counties in western Florida, with videos published by authorities showing water levels ranging from a few feet up to approximately 6 feet or more of floodwaters.